

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TASK FORCE STUDY

From June 15 to June 21, 2005, Urban Development conducted a survey of Community Development Task Force members using an on-line survey instrument. The purpose of the survey was to determine how to improve attendance at CDTF meetings. The results of the survey are shown below, followed by a list of recommendations from Urban Development.

CDTF Survey Results

A total of 17 of 22 active members responded to the survey. Several of those who did not respond had been active members for less than one year.

The top four reasons given by members in response to the question “why did you join” the task force included, “to make a difference in my community” (88%), “to learn more about programs and activities” (71%), “to improve programs and activities” (53%), and because they were “asked to join by the City” (53%).

Only one member was dissatisfied with their task force experience. Sixty-five percent were very satisfied (12%) or satisfied, and the rest (29%) were neutral. There were mostly positive results regarding the following aspects of their CDTF experience:

- The ability to contribute to UDD plans and activities: 65% satisfied and 12% dissatisfied
- The information provided in packets: 88% satisfied and 6% dissatisfied
- The information provided at meetings: 82% satisfied and none dissatisfied
- The information provided about programs and activities: 76% satisfied and 12% dissatisfied
- The convenience of the meeting location: 41% satisfied and 36% dissatisfied
- The convenience of the meeting times: 58% satisfied and 6% dissatisfied
- Reminders of the meeting times: 88% satisfied and none dissatisfied
- The frequency of meetings: 88% satisfied and none dissatisfied
- The refreshments provided: 53% satisfied and 6% dissatisfied

Members were the most satisfied with meeting reminders and information provided. Comments were directed mainly at parking problems. There were additional comments suggesting that we reduce technical jargon and acronyms, move beyond HUD’s technical requirements, and take advantage of the wealth of knowledge our task force members possess. By providing additional guidance to our members on how they can contribute, we might be able to get greater participation.

Most agree (63%) that the orientation prepared them to be task force members, while only one (6%) disagreed. Slightly more than half agreed that their opinions were valued (53%), while only one (6%) disagreed. Less than half agreed that the meetings were worthwhile and an good use of their time (47%), while only one (6%) disagreed.

Over half of those that were unable to attend meetings in the past did not attend because of conflicts with their work schedule, whether part of their normal work schedule or unexpected conflicts. Half of the respondents also missed meetings because of vacations. Other personal conflicts (44%) and illnesses (44%) were reasons as well. Finally, our members are busy not only with work, but other volunteer commitments (38%).

Half of the task force members felt that their attendance could be improved by changing the location of the meeting or otherwise resolving the parking problem (i.e., parking validation) and/or by sending an e-mail reminder one week before the meeting. Validating parking (44%) and reminders the day of the meeting (38%) could also improve attendance. Over half (56%) of members responding preferred either F Street Rec Center or Neighborhoods Inc. (NeighborWorks Lincoln) over the existing location (38%). Others emphasized anywhere there is parking. Additionally, the majority of respondents (73%) prefer to keep the meeting time the same (from 4:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.).

The majority (53%) supports amending the bylaws to vote by proxy.

Recommendations

The Urban Development Department plans to make the following immediate changes:

- Change the venue of the CDTF meetings to the F Street Rec Center or similar location for the October meeting.
- Identify replacement members that would be active participants.
- Change the reminder method for meetings to e-mails the week before and day of task force, and discontinue phone reminders.

The following changes will be further explored:

- Discuss with the Mayor's office appropriate action for members with two or more unexcused absences.
- Discuss with the Mayor's office and staff ways to make the CDTF more worthwhile for both the City and members.